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August 8, 2013

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 13-184, CC Docket No. 02-6, GN Docket No. 09-51

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On August 7, 2013, representatives from the National Education Association including myself, Mary Kusler, Director of Government Relations, Corey Williams a Federal Lobbyist and Caroline Strauss a third grade teacher, met with Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel and Priscilla Argeris to discuss issues relating to the E-rate program and the recently issued NPRM.

During the meeting, my colleagues and I applauded the Commission for recognizing the critical need to modernize the E-rate program and strongly agreed that connectivity to the Internet is simply not enough. Our classrooms must be built upon a broadband infrastructure that not only meets current need but also has the *capacity* to support 21st century teaching and learning. We also discussed opportunities to help realize the goal of evolving the E-rate program from being focused on connectivity to one that helps ensure sufficient high-capacity broadband is available to all our schools.

We also spent some time discussing the implementation of the Common Core standards across the country and the technology needs that school districts will have in order to meet the requirements of the new assessments. These new assessments will be based on line but they will also provide educators the opportunity to get real time results that will help improve student instruction.

In addition, we discussed questions raised in the E-rate NPRM, including: the long overdue need to increase E-rate funding, as demand has now reached double the amount available; potential strategies to ensure that the unique environs that challenge many rural schools in accessing high-capacity broadband are met; and, generally discussing potential challenges or opportunities by possible changes to the list of eligible services and discount matrix.

Finally, my colleagues and I brainstormed ways to encourage broad participation in the E-rate Modernization NPRM process to ensure a broad range of ideas and perspectives will be represented.

Sincerely,

Mary Kusler
Director of Government Relations